

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HEW-02 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6174

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV SEDU BF

SUBJ: ALLEGED OFFER OF HEW ASSISTANCE TO COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS

REF: SALISBURY/HIGH TELCONS 11-13-74, 11-14-74

1. EMBOFF CONTACTED NOV 13 BY DR. MEAKIN, REGISTRAR OF NEW COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS IN NASSAU, WHO ASKED EMBASSY'S INFORMAL ASSISTANCE IN CHECKING CREDENTIALS OF INDIVIDUAL IDENTIFIED AS BOBBIE TYLER. MEAKIN SAID HE HAD RECEIVED LETTER, WITHOUT LETTERHEAD, FROM TYLER IN OCTOBER. TYLER SAID SHE WAS WITH "OFFICE OF DISBURSEMENTS OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE" AND WISHED TO VISIT NASSAU TO MEET WITH COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS OFFICIALS. TYLER DID SO FIRST WEEK OF NOVEMBER.

2. MEAKIN INDICATED TO EMBASSY THAT TYLER HAD MENTIONED FURNISHING EDUCATIONAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS, BUT MEAKIN AND OTHERS HAD SOME DOUBTS ABOUT HER CREDENTIALS. EMBASSY CALLED DEPARTMENT IN COURSE OF OTHER BUSINESS AND ASKED THAT DEPARTMENT MAKE LOW-KEY EFFORT TO CHECK ON TYLER WITH HEW. DEPARTMENT LATER REPORTED THAT HEW HAD FURNISHED FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (A) HEW HAS NO "OFFICE OF DISBURSEMENTS"; (B) ALL EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS WOULD BE DISBURSED BY GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, NOT HEW; (C) THAT HEW PERSONNEL ROSTERS INDICATED NO EMPLOYEE NAMED BOBBIE OR ROBERTA TYLER.

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THIS INFORMATION, WHILE NOT DEFINITIVE, INDICATED THAT SOME

CAUTION SHOULD BE EMPLOYED IN DEALINGS WITH TYLER. FOREGOING PASSED TO MEAKING EARLY NOVEMBER 15.

3. NASSAU EVENING NEWSPAPER NOVEMBER 14 RAN STORY WITH HEADLINE "WILL US HELP FINANCE COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS?" LEAD RUNS "THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE COLLEGE OF THE BAHAMAS COULD BE COMPLETED BY 1977 IF THE BAHAMAS GOVERNMENT PERMITS THE US GOVERNMENT TO ASSIST IN THE FINANCING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE REVEALED RECENTLY." SUPPOSED HEW REPRESENTATIVE IDENTIFIED AS MRS. BOBBIE TYLER. TYLER QUOTED AS SAYING "I KNOW OF WAYS TO GET A LOT OF CAPITAL FUNDING FOR THE BUILDING AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COLLEGE ... EDUCATION IS THE EASIEST THING TO SELL ... WE IN HEW CAN ORGANIZE PROFESSIONAL TENNIS AND GOLF MATCHES TO BE HELD IN NASSAU AND MAKE IT COMPULSORY FOR A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE OF THE PROFIT TO GO TOWARDS THE FINANCING OF THE COLLEGE."

4. ARTICLE CONTINUES TO QUOTE TYLER "BESIDES THE FACT THAT HEW CAN OBTAIN TREMENDOUS LOANS FROM SUCH COMPANIES SUCH AS TEXACO, WE CAN ARRANGE FOR PROFESSIONAL SINGERS AND MODELS TO STAGE SHOWS IN NASSAU" WITH PERCENTAGE OF PROFITS GOING TO COLLEGE. ARTICLE REPORTS TYLER SAID HEW COULD FILM COLLEGE OF BAHAMAS IN ITS PRESENT STATE AND SELL FILMS TO BOARDS OF EDUCATION AROUND THE US. QUOTING TYLER "THIS WILL NOT ONLY GIVE THE SCHOOL UNTOLD PUBLICITY, BUT WILL GENERATE A WHOLE LOT OF CAPITAL FOR THE COLLEGE." TYLER REPORTED TO PREDICT THAT ENROLLMENT IN COLLEGE WOULD, WITH HEW ASSISTANCE AS OUTLINED BY HER, JUMP FROM 3,000 STUDENTS TO 30,000, WITH COLLEGE MAKING "MILLIONS OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS" BECAUSE OF HIGH FEES IT COULD CHARGE FOREIGN STUDENTS. MEAKIN QUOTED IN ARTICLE AS BEING "VERY ENTHUSIASTIC" ABOUT TYLER'S "PROGRAMME", ALTHOUGH COLLEGE PRESIDENT DR. JOHN KNOWLES WOULD ONLY SAY HE WAS "WILLING TO LEARN MORE" ABOUT IT. ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH STATEMENT THAT TYLER WILL RETURN IN DECEMBER "TO CONTINUE THE TALKS".

5. ACTION REQUESTED: REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONTACT HEW AND SEEK TO DEFINITELY EVALUATE TYLER'S CREDENTIALS. REQUEST RESPONSE ASAP WEEK OF NOVEMBER 18 SO THAT EMBASSY CAN USE IT TO REFUTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IMPLICATIONS OF NEWS STORY AND ACTIVITIES OF TYLER, BOTH OF WHICH APPEAR TO HAVE POTENTIAL FOR MISLEADING BAHAMIAN OFFICIALS AND PUBLIC, CREATING UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENT DISAPPOINTMENT, AND CAUSING GENERAL MISCHIEF HERE. WEISS

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